

Transactions

SEPTEMBER 2003

TRANSPORTATION NEWS
FOR THE NINE-COUNTY
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market is run by CUESA, the Center for Urban Education About Sustainable Agriculture.

Visiting the Ferry Building

Eating and Shopping

Located at the foot of Market Street, the San Francisco Ferry Building has been transformed from a classic transportation center to an urban bazaar that showcases local farmers and brings “the bounty of the Bay Area together under one roof,” according to the complex’s promotional material.

The 10-year-old Ferry Plaza Farmers Market has moved back to the arcades directly in front of the Ferry Building and the sidewalk along the Embarcadero, spilling onto the side and rear plaza during the popular Saturday markets. Featuring organically grown produce, cheeses, jams, pastries, condiments and flowers, the farmers market now operates four days a week, with a special garden market for plant enthusiasts on Sundays. The indoor Ferry Building Marketplace occupying the main corridor is the new permanent home to specialty food purveyors — the ever-growing list reads like a who’s who of the Bay Area’s top food enterprises. The ground floor also will accommodate several eateries.

— Deanna Yick

Ferry Plaza Farmers Market

Tuesday 10 am – 2 pm
Thursday 3 pm – 7 pm
Saturday 8 am – 2 pm
Sunday garden market 9 am – 3 pm
Phone 415.353.5650
<www.ferryplazafarmersmarket.com>

Ferry Building Marketplace

Open daily; hours vary
Phone 415.693.0996
<www.ferrybuildingmarketplace.com>

Riding Ferries

Five ferry systems dock at six berths located behind the San Francisco Ferry Building:

- Alameda/Oakland Ferry
- Blue & Gold Tiburon Ferry Service
- Golden Gate Transit ferries (to Larkspur and Sausalito in Marin County)
- Harbor Bay Ferry (to Harbor Bay Isle in the city of Alameda)
- Vallejo Baylink Ferry

For more information on ferries and other transit service to the Ferry Building, including San Francisco Muni’s F-Line historic streetcars, call MTC’s traveler information service at 511 or log on to <www.511.org>. Ferry expansion plans can be viewed at <www.watertransit.org>.



The renovated Ferry Building is the centerpiece of a suite of waterfront improvement projects.

Century-Old Ferry Building Comes of Age

RENOVATED SAN FRANCISCO LANDMARK POISED TO TAKE ON EXPANDED ROLE

The \$100 million face-lift and seismic retrofit of San Francisco’s 105-year-old Ferry Building has had the effect that a little cosmetic surgery often produces: Those around it are finally taking notice. Inside the newly renovated building, the voices and footsteps of commuters, visitors and food purveyors echo through the hollow center and create a vibrant atmosphere. On days when the resident farmers’ market operates, the intoxicating scent of fresh fruits, vegetables, pastries and flowers greets visitors. It is hard to believe that this now bustling site was neglected for so many years before motions to restore it to its original grandeur began in the 1990s.



During the peak ferry years in the 1920s and early 1930s, as many as 50,000 commuters and other travelers passed through the Ferry Building each day. With the opening of the Bay and Golden Gate bridges in 1936 and 1937, respectively, ferry travel overwhelmingly gave way to automobile traffic. Construction of the Embarcadero Freeway in the 1950s further diminished the landmark’s role by obstructing the city-side view of the building. The interior eventually was divided up and converted into offices.

The building’s fortunes began to turn around in the early 1990s when demolition of the Embarcadero Freeway — which was damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake — focused city and regional planners’ attention on the potential of San Francisco’s waterfront.

New Life for Antique Structure

While leaving the facade largely intact, crews removed office walls and asbestos tiles, replaced missing and damaged bricks, and restored the second level’s mosaic floor and its image of the seal of the state of California tile by tile. Long stretches of the second floor were removed to once again allow natural light to shine down onto the ground floor through the skylight that runs the entire length of the 660-foot nave. The iconic 240-foot clock tower that has served as a beacon by both land and sea for more than 100 years also has

been restored and restarted.

Currently, about 11,000 ferry riders pass through the refurbished building each weekday — a number that swells with scores of downtown workers and visitors who come for other reasons.

“The Ferry Building has become a destination in itself,” said Senior Waterfront Planner Dan Hodapp with the Port of San Francisco.

Food Meets Ferries

Stalls housing local specialty food merchants now line the corridor of the ground floor, creating a marketplace reminiscent of those in Europe. The relocation of the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market from its temporary venue a few blocks away adds to the energized aura.

At the same time as refurbishing the building proper, the Port of San Francisco has been upgrad-

ing adjacent ferry facilities. Two state-of-the-art floating docks with covered walkways and mechanical lifts for disabled passengers became operational in the spring of 2002. A new 30-foot-wide esplanade invites pedestrians to stroll beside the ferry landings and enjoy expansive views of the Bay. The Port also installed a new breakwater to protect ferries from winter storm surges, and is in the process of constructing a 600-foot-long public access pier that will jut into the Bay along the top of the breakwater.

Under a pair of bills in Sacramento (both spearheaded by state Senator Don Perata), things could get even busier at the ferry complex. Senate Bill 915 essentially blesses the fledgling Bay Area Water Transit Authority’s plans for beefing up ferry service on the Bay, while Senate Bill 916 would put before Bay Area voters a \$1 increase in tolls on the region’s state-owned bridges to fund new and expanded ferry lines and a host of other transit services.

For Oakland resident Kathie Oleson, the restoration arouses nostalgia. “I used to take the ferry as a little girl, and my father left for World War II from this building,” she said on a recent visit to the complex. “I’m glad it’s being saved and put to such a wonderful use. It’s a place dear to our hearts and it’s part of our history.”

— Deanna Yick



Natural light floods the Ferry Building’s nave, a grand central hall.

Calendar

FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 12, 2003

10 am
Caltrans Auditorium
111 Grand Avenue, Oakland
Planning and Operations Committee*

10:30 am
Caltrans Auditorium
111 Grand Avenue, Oakland
Legislation Committee*

MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 15, 2003

1:30 pm
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
Partnership Technical Advisory Committee

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 16, 2003

3:30 pm
MetroCenter, 3rd Floor Conference Room
Minority Citizens Advisory Committee

WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 17, 2003

7 pm
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
MTC/Association of Bay Area Governments Task Force

Public Hearing:
Proposals for improving regional planning

FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 19, 2003

10 am
Alameda County Congestion Management Agency
1333 Broadway, Suite 220, Oakland
MTC/Association of Bay Area Governments Task Force

1:30 pm
MetroCenter, Room 171
Regional Agency Coordinating Committee

WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 24, 2003

10 am
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
Bay Area Toll Authority*

10:10 am
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 30, 2003

9 am
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium

Workshop:
Transportation control measures for ozone attainment

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 2, 2003

10 am
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee

WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 8, 2003

9:30 am
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
Administration Committee*

10 am
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
Bay Area Toll Authority Oversight Committee*

10:30 am
MetroCenter, Dahms Auditorium
Programming and Allocations Committee*

12:30 pm
MetroCenter, Room 171
MTC Advisory Council

* Webcast on <www.mtc.ca.gov>

Note: Dates, times and locations of MTC meetings may change. Please confirm by calling 510.464.7787. Agendas, updated meeting schedules and packets for MTC standing committees are posted on MTC’s Web site: <www.mtc.ca.gov>.

Project Update: Bayfront Expressway

Widening Project Completed Three Months Early

Motorists traveling between the East Bay and San Mateo County via the Dumbarton Bridge now have a smoother, faster commute thanks to the completion of a project to widen and upgrade the Bayfront Expressway/State Route 84 between the bridge and Marsh Road in Menlo Park.

Previously, the expressway was six lanes wide between the bridge and University Avenue, where it narrowed to four lanes. Crews add-

ed a lane in each direction from University Avenue to Marsh Road so that the expressway is now six lanes wide along its entire length. Shoulders also were widened to a standard width of 10 feet, and additional dedicated turn lanes were installed at key intersections.

Local officials gathered in late July to announce the opening of the new lanes to traffic — three months earlier than expected.

“The expressway is only three miles long, but it’s a critical link for the 60,000 motorists who use the roadway daily,” said MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger. The Bayfront Expressway widening is part of a \$1.6 billion package funded by \$1 of the \$2 toll paid on the seven state-owned toll bridges. The bridge improvement program is overseen by MTC in its role as the Bay Area Toll Authority.



New turn lanes are helping to speed traffic on the widened Bayfront Expressway, which delivers traffic to and from the Dumbarton Bridge.

The \$36 million Bayfront Expressway project includes:

- widening Willow Road and University Avenue from the railroad tracks to State Route 84;
- upgrades to a parallel bicycle/pedestrian pathway, which links to the Dumbarton Bridge bicycle path and is part of the regional Bay Trail; and
- work to upgrade the traffic signal system along the Bayfront Expressway, which will be completed in September.

Viewing areas have been installed along the salt flats for Bay Trail users. In the final phase,

\$650,000 will be spent to protect more than eight acres of habitat for the endangered salt marsh harvest mouse and create more than three acres of seasonal wetlands in the Ravenswood Triangle.

The widening project will provide relief for the East Palo Alto community by taking the burden off the city’s chief artery, University Avenue, and encouraging drivers to use the Marsh Road/U.S. 101 interchange instead.

Caltrans was responsible for the design and construction of the expressway widening.

— Réka Goode



As part of the expressway project, the Bay Trail was upgraded.

In Memoriam

Miriam Gholikely, Volunteer Extraordinaire

The Bay Area lost a dedicated transit advocate when Miriam Gholikely passed away in late July at the age of 91 after a battle with cancer.

At the time of her death, Miriam had the unique distinction of sitting on all three of MTC’s citizen advisory panels. She was a member of MTC’s Minority Citizens Advisory Committee for nearly two decades, also chairing the panel in the mid-1990s. She also was a founding and continuing member of MTC’s Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee and represented senior and minority interests on MTC’s Advisory Council, which consults with the Commission on a broad range of topics.

In addition to her MTC commitments, Gholikely served on the SamTrans Board of Directors from 1982 to 1990, rising to the position of chair in 1985. Gholikely also served as a charter member of SamTrans’ Citizens Advisory Committee and as the first chair of the San Mateo County Paratransit Coordinating Council. Her activism earned her a spot as a delegate to the 1981 White House Conference on Aging, and involvement with the California Senior Legislature. She also served as the vice president of human resources for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) from 1987 to 1989.



In 1994 Gholikely was inducted into the APTA Transit Hall of Fame. She was further recognized when MTC presented her with the Grand Award for transit leadership as part of its 1982 Transportation Awards Program, and with the Doris Kahn Accessible Transportation Award as part of its year 2000 Transportation Awards Program.

“I have been a persistent advocate for mobility with dignity for everyone, from children to elders,” she stated several years ago.

Gholikely was honored for her volunteer work by such entities as the United Way of the Bay Area, KGO-TV and the San Francisco

chapter of the Women’s Transportation Seminar.

Born and raised in Atlanta and trained as a chemist, Gholikely came to California more than 50 years ago. She held several public sector positions before retiring in 1982 to a life of community service. Her Southern charm, ready smile and diminutive stature belied the dynamo within who was on a first name basis with state legislators and members of Congress, and who had a knack for opening doors at all levels of government.

Gholikely is survived by her husband Alexander, children Paul and Angela, and five grandchildren.

— Brenda Kahn

Donations may be made to: Miriam Gholikely College Fund c/o Washington Mutual 2800 Junipero Serra Boulevard Daly City, CA 94015

Commission Actions

JULY 2003

- Adopted revised Federal Public Involvement Procedures. The revised procedures reflect a recent restructuring of MTC’s advisory committees to encourage more interchange with the Commission. The procedures also call for more actively involving bilingual and multilingual communities in the public comment process, and commit to “responding to every letter, fax and e-mail sent by members of the public.” (MTC Resolution 2648)
- Appointed 12 members to new two-year terms on MTC’s Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee and 18 members to new two-year terms on MTC’s Minority Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC), in the process expanding the breadth of coverage on MCAC to include perspectives of low-income communities, with two “at-large” seats so dedicated. In addition, the Commission appointed an additional person to represent the construction industry on MTC’s Advisory Council. (MTC Resolution 3516)
- Agreed to allocate \$1 million in Low Income Flexible Transportation (LIFT) funds to implement the second year of AC Transit’s low-income student bus pass program with the understanding that AC Transit will modify the program to charge all youths \$15 for a 31-day pass, and that AC will aggressively market the pass to low-income students. (MTC Resolution 3589)

Update 2030

Transportation 2030 Outreach: Call for Project Ideas

MTC is soliciting public input to the long-range *Transportation 2030 Plan* via several avenues this fall. In addition to initiating a dialogue with MTC’s own advisory groups in September, MTC staff will make presentations about T2030 core issues at meetings sponsored by a number of public policy groups. MTC also intends to provide grants to community-based organizations to cosponsor workshops in low-income neighborhoods in the coming weeks.

The public at large can continue to participate via MTC’s interactive T2030 Web site, which offers a form for submitting (by mid-September) project ideas for improving mobility, travel safety or livability in the region.

For interactive features and updates on outreach efforts, visit: <www.mtc.ca.gov/T2030>.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION WWW.MTC.CA.GOV

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SEPTEMBER 2003

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